THE SINNERS SALVATION:

Resolving
This weighty case of Conscience; *viz. What course a poore soule should take that hee may be saved.*

Luke 19. 9.
This day is Salvation come to thy house.

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THE SINNERS SALVATION.

Acts 16. 31.

They said unto him, If thou canst beleeve in the name of the Lord Iesus Christ, thou maist bee saved with all thine house.

THe greatest question in the world is this, what course wee must take to bee saved. A reverend Divine once said to a poore soule that

told him he was troubled about his salvation, I tell thee (said hee) it is able to trouble the whole world. The Apostle *Paul* speakes of foolish and unprofitable questions, 2 *Tim.* 2.23. but this is a grave, learned, wise, profound question; it is like the hard questions of the Queene of *Sheba*, that she came from the utmost parts of the earth to be resolved of; It is so weighty and necessary a question, that a man may well travell all the world over to bee resolved about it; it is both a hard question to aske, and a hard question to answer.

First, it is a hard question

ſtion to ask, to aske it ſeriouſly indeed: People are full of other queſtiõs, when they are poor, how they ſhall bee able to live & maintain their Charge: when they are ſick, how they ſhall bee able õ goe abroad, as *Ahazial* when he was ſicke, asked whether he ſhould recover or no? Every man can aske temporall bleſſings concerning the things of this life, but few there be that ſeeke after eternity, that put forth this queſtion, *What they ſhall doe to bee ſaved?* The world is like the woman of *Samaria*, Chriſt asked her for water, but ſhee would not aske Chriſt for the water Iohn 4.

of Life. True indeed it is, that many will aske this queſtion after a formall faſhion in a pang of ſickneſſe, or diſtreſſe of conſcience, for a ſpirt and away, but if we come to the life and maine end of the queſtion, how few are there that ſeeke ſeriouſly how they may bee ſaved.

The *Iaylour* here asked the queſtion, *Sirs, what ſhall I doe to bee ſaved*, but it was with much adoe; the very earth muſt ſhake firſt, and the priſon doores flie open, and the Priſoners bonds be looſned aſunder; ſtrange works muſt be done, before ever hee would demand

mand what ſhould become of his poore ſoule? The Lord was driven to terrifie him with feare, and terror, and aſtoniſhment, before hee would aske this queſtion, What hee might doe to bee ſaved?

People for the moſt part thinke on this Queſtion according as the gripes and pangs of their conſcience urge them to it; happily ſometimes in a good mood they will ask of a Miniſter or a child of God, what they ſhall doe to be ſaved, and how they may bee delivered from the wrath of God; like *Pilate*, that asked Chriſt; *What is the truth?* but yet Iohn 18. 38.

was not very eager to know it; so, many will ask what is to bee done to escape the vengeance of God, but they will not take the pains nor use the means to accomplish the same. It is a very hard thing to winde a man up to this pitch, to enquire seriously about his salvation.

The Reason is, because people are selfe-conceited, and think they know sufficient already what is to bee done that way, they have not lived so long under the Ministery of the Word, they have not enjoyed the means of grace all this while, but they know what to doe to bee saved. But

But if they are ignorant of the way of life, and begin to enquire after it, then every ſleight anſwer will ſerve the turne, halfe an anſwer ſhall give them ſatisfaction; nay, ſo deſperately carnall are moſt men, that their luſts and corruptions are not able to heare the anſwer of the Almighty to this queſtion propounded, they cannot abide to doe as they muſt doe, if ever they be ſaved. It is a hard thing to put the ſoule upon a ſound ſerious enquiry after bleſſedneſſe, it were halfe the converſion of a ſinner to make him goe roundly about this buſineſſe.

Secondly, as it is a hard queſtion to aske and put men upon, ſo likewiſe it is much more hard to be anſwered; there is not a more difficult nor a more neceſſary queſtion ſo nearly concerning every man, than this. What a poor creature ſinfull duſt and aſhes ſhould be to eſcape the wrath of GOD, and avoid the great miſery that is like to come upon him by reaſon of his ſinnes, conſidering how hee hath broken the royall Law of God, and hath pulled upon his pate all the curſings and threatnings denounced in the Word, and hath expoſed himſelfe to the judgements

ments of God every moment, and made himſelfe a loſt creature; having the ſentence of damnation writ round about him; oh beloved, to tell ſuch a man what he ſhall doe to be ſaved, is a very difficult and hard matter.

Now this Text here plainly reſolves this great doubt, and tels every poore ſinner what hee muſt doe that he may be ſaved. When the Jaylour had propounded this Queſtion with great humiliation and aſtoniſhment of heart, not knowing which way to turne himſelfe, nor what would become of him, (being utterly undone in his own appre-

apprehenſion,) this anſwer was preſently given him, *Beleeve in the Name of the Lord Ieſus Chriſt, and thou ſhalt be ſaved.*

In which words wee have theſe foure things.

1 The Act of Faith, *Beleeve.*

2 The proper object of Faith, *In the Name of the Lord Ieſus Chriſt.*

3 The bleſſed effect of Faith, *Thou ſhalt be ſaved.*

4 The Communication or ſpreading of this bleſſed effect, *And thine houſhold:* Thou ſhalt not onely get ſalvation to thine own ſoule, but thou ſhalt bring ſalvation to thine houſe, and all they ſhall have the privileges

ges of the Goſpell, they ſhall partake of theſe prerogatives too; if ſalvation come to thee, it ſhall come to thy very houſe and all.

So that here wee ſee the only way to ſalvation is by beleeving; there is no way to anſwer this needfull and weighty Queſtion, *What muſt we doe to be ſaved*, but onely by beleeving in the name of Chriſt; all the way to heaven, every ſtep of it, all the dayes of our lives, is by walking in the wayes of faith, and going on in thoſe pathes which faith preſcribes; a going out of a mans ſelfe, and walking and living by the life

life of another, daily depending upon Chriſt, and enjoying communiō with him; this is to live the life of faith; a man can never come to heaven, but only by this way, a mans life muſt be ſteared and guided by faith, this muſt be the roote of all our thoughts, words and deeds; it muſt bee the great wheele of the Clock; this is the maine wheele of all, by which the whole carriage of our lives is ordered; if a man will walke in the way to heaven, he muſt walke in the way of faith; no man can come thither without this grace.

Object. You will ſay, Is this the hard

hard Queſtion which you talke of, to beleeve in the Name of the Lord Jeſus? wee know that well enough: he is an ignorant ſot that cannot tell this; we ſee no ſuch difficulty in it; every Chriſtian, every Novice in Religion knowes he muſt beleeve in the Name of the Lord Jeſus.

Anſ. I anſwer, it is an eaſie matter to give the litteral anſwer of the queſtion; but to ſet a man in the courſe to bee ſaved, to bring the ſoul to ſalvation indeed, to direct him in the way wherein he may obtain the favor of God, and have God reconciled unto him, this is very hard;

hard; as if a man ſhould ask, How ſhould I get up into the aire like a bird? Why, if a man can flie as a bird doth, hee may eaſily do it: but there lies all the difficulty, what ſhall a man doe that hee may flie? So, how ſhall a man doe to bee ſaved? why, hee muſt beleeve; that is the onely way to ſalvation, and eternall life: but here lies all the difficulty, How ſhal a man do to beleeve?

Generally men are miſtaken about faith, they confeſſe they cannot pray well, nor remember a Sermon well, and they have not ſuch gifts as others have; nor ſuch know-

knowledge as others have, but for the gift of beleeving that they can eaſily attaine unto; therefore I deſire to open this point unto you, wherein firſt I will declare what ſaving faith is, for it will bee bootleſſe to ſet down the ſeverall credible things that wee are to beleeve in the Goſpell, unleſſe we know what faith is, therefore this ſhall be our firſt worke, namely, to expound faith, and make it appeare to you what it is to beleeve aright: There are many things to be done before a man can beleeve, give mee leave to inſiſt upon them in the firſt place.

Before

Before a man can possibly beleeve, there are sundry things to bee performed by him, which I desire a little to insist upon; as,

1 Before any soule can beleeve, he must know, & spiritually apprehẽd that he hath brokẽ all the law of God in every part and parcell of it, and is guilty of all the curses therein, even of death and damnation; and is lyable to all the plagues denounced against sinne and sinners, even the wrath of the Almighty, and the gnawings of hell, which never have an end; therefore Divines use to say, before a man can beleeve, the

the Law must kill him: *Paul* never beleeved, till hee was stabbed by the Law, till he was made a dead man, and an undone creature in his own eyes; *When the Commandement came, sinne revived, but I dyed,* (saith he.) Rom. 7.

When a poore man is arrested, all his Creditours come upon him, and one demands, and another demands; one an hundred pounds, another forty, another twenty, another ten pounds, according as the debt is: Now a man before hee can beleeve, is arrested by the Law, and all the Commandements come about him, and every precept

precept gives him a pull, and ſayes, Pay me, and ſatisfie mee, and are as ſwords, runne into his ſides, as it were, and ſo he is a dead man before hee can beleeve; and this muſt neceſſarily be done: For if a man had fulfilled the Law himſelfe, hee ſhould have no need of a Surety. If hee had not broken the Law in his owne perſon, hee could not have faith to lay hold upon a Surety: but when he hath broken the Law, and the Commandements wound him, & lay him dead in himſelf, then he can look out elſ-where for life.

Secondly, he muſt bee emptied,

emptied, and evacuated of himſelfe; he muſt bee wrought upon ſo as to be ſenſible of his owne nothingneſſe, that he cannot ſo much as thinke a good thought, he can no way further his owne recovery, he is ſhiftleſſe and remedileſſe, and comfortleſſe, and helpleſſe, and is not able to ſet one ſtep forward towards his owne deliverance: *While we were without ſtrength* (ſayes the Apoſtle) *Chriſt came to juſtifie the ungodly.* It was high time for Chriſt to come then, if ever hee would ſave them; they were utterly unable to ſave themſelves; they were not onely

Rom. 5. 6.

onely deſtitute of life in themſelves, but they were utterly void of all ability to ſuck life from another. As man is utterly unable to keepe the firſt condition of the Covenant of workes, and ſo is dead that way, ſo alſo he is unable to keepe the condition of the ſecond Covenant of Grace, & is dead that way too; and ſo hee is a dead man every way; therfore Divines doe make deſpaire, in ſome ſort, the firſt ſtep to faith; he muſt deſpaire of himſelfe, hee muſt ſee himſelfe utterly loſt and undone, departed and wandred from God, hee muſt ſee an utter impoſſi-

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bilitie of recovering himſelfe againe, and of power to thinke a good thought, or ſpeak a good word, or make a good prayer, or have a good deſire; yea, ſo farre from being able to repent, or beleeve, that hee cannot doe one jot or tittle of the worke of repentance and faith; but is utterly deprived of all hope of having life in himſelfe; a man muſt bee quite ſtript of ſelfe-worthineſſe, and of all thoſe wretched principles of nature, whereby he would live of himſelf, and have his owne ends, and his owne will, and his owne confidences, and his owne conceits, and live

live within his compaſſe and the reach of his owne nature; this is a curſed diſpoſition naturally in the hearts of men, and muſt be rooted out, elſe faith cannot enter in.

Thirdly, there muſt be a dogmaticall knowledge of all the Goſpell of Chriſt, how that Chriſt is come from heaven, and hath taken fleſh upon him, and hath ſatisfied the wrath of God, by the expiation of Divine Juſtice, and hath trodden the Wine-preſſe alone, fulfilled all righteouſneſſe, having done and ſuffered all things neceſſary for mans ſalvation, and hath ſhewed us the way, and chalked

ked out the paths for us to walke in; we muſt have knowledge of the points of ſalvation, and the grounds of Religion; the moſt neceſſary points I meane. An ignorant man cannot beleeve there is knowledge before faith, and there is knowledge after faith: when a man is growne to be a beleever, then hee hath ſaving knowledge, and ſanctified knowledge, and hath his eyes opened, and his underſtanding enlightned better than before; ſo there is a knowledge before faith, a knowledge of all the doctrine of the Goſpell; *We have knowne and beleeved* (ſaith the Apoſtle) Ioh. 4. 16.

poſtle) *the love that GOD hath towards us*; A man muſt firſt have knowledge before he can beleeve; if knowledge goe not before, faith cannot follow after; if a man beleeve, he muſt have knowledge, elſe it is no better than the Colliers faith, I beleeve as the Church beleeves; and being asked how the Church beleeved, ſaid, As I beleeve, which was all he could ſay; this is a blinde faith: True faith cannot dwell in an ignorant heart, grace is a King that will not dwell in a blinde houſe, there ſhall be great windowes, an excellent underſtanding, a

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right conceiving of the Goſpell, & the myſteries of Gods Kingdome, otherwiſe it is impoſſible for faith to take poſſeſſion of the ſoule in a comfortable manner.

Fourthly and laſtly, the ſoule muſt be acquainted with the meaning of God in the Goſpell; the ſinner muſt be taught from above, more than all the preachers in the world can teach him, more than all Sermons, Bookes and Writings of men can direct him; for except a man be taught from above, he cannot beleeve: *Hee that hath heard and learned of the Father, commeth unto me.* The ſoule Ioh. 6. 55.

muſt reaſon thus, If I receive Chriſt as Lord and King, as a Prophet, and as a Prieſt; if I receive Chriſt, and yeeld my ſelf to him, and take Chriſt upon his own termes, and accept him upon his own cõditions, I ſhal be ſaved, and have life, and peace, and comfort, and joy in the holy Ghoſt, and ſo the ſoule is made to have hope, and beleeve a poſſibility of his receiving to mercy; and it is a certaine truth theſe workes muſt be wrought before true and ſaving grace can be effected in us.

Now here bee two things which I would faine open.

First,

Firſt, the Reaſons why theſe Antecedents muſt goe before faith. 1

Secondly, what be the effects that they worke in the heart. 2

The Reaſons are,

Firſt, becauſe till the ſoule bee pinched with neceſſity, it will never beleeve in Chriſt; the heart naturally hates Chriſt, and cannot abide his purity and ſtrictneſſe; the heart of man is deceitfull, and his minde corrupt, and his thoughts and affections vaine and looſe, they muſt be boūd to their good behaviour: Now this the heart doth not love, therefore it is an enemy to Chriſt, and

cannot abide to come in and submit unto him; unlesse the soule be pinched by necessity, and forced, and made to come by the power of Gods Word, it will never yeeld: As it was with the prodigall Sonne, untill hee was pinched with the famine, hee could not abide to come to his Father, his minde ranne upon his rioting and wantonnesse, and whorings, and gaming; his heart was wholly set upon his pleasures: wee never heare that he had any thoughts of returning to his fathers house, till hee first smarted soundly, and was pinched by the famine, and

and grievouſly diſtreſſed by being abſent from his father: ſo long as hee could make any ſhift to live, ſo long as hee could keepe life and ſoule together, he would never thinke of going home, till he was not able to hold, and was utterly undone, not knowing which way to turne, nor what courſe to take, being utterly forlorne, and deſperately forſaken, and brought to ſuch ſtreights that hee was at a loſſe, then he thinkes of returning; but ſo long as hee had any ſhifts to ſuffice himſelfe with Husks and Huls, he would not ſtirre a foot to his fathers

houſe; but when hee comes to bee ſtreightned and grievouſly beſet with poverty, miſery, and wretchedneſſe, and the ſenſe of Gods wrath, then he began to come to himſelfe, and to his right wits, and purpoſe with himſelfe never to give over till he humbled himſelfe before his Father: the heart will never goe home to Chriſt till wee bee ſtraitned with the want of Chriſt, and feele the miſery of being without Chriſt; till our hearts aske for him, and our very bowels ſmart within us: when we come to be ſtraitned and pinched with neceſſity, and

and ſee, *There is no other name under heaven whereby we can be ſaved, but by the Name of Chriſt*; Either to Chriſt wee muſt goe, or to hell for ever; either wee muſt have comfort there or no where; either wee muſt have friends there or no friends, either refuge there or no refuge, either wee muſt bee received there, or caſt out every where; when the ſoule knows not what ſhall become of it ſelfe, when it is driven from all ſuccours below: at laſt it harkens after Chriſt, and ſeekes to him. So long as the ſoule can have any ſhifts, it will rather content it

Acts 4.10.

selfe with vaine conceits, and false delusions of Sathan, than with Christ himselfe, and many goe on in the imagination of having Christ, when as indeed they never really close with him by faith, unlesse the Lord doth humble them, and tame them, and put them upon the pikes, and make it plainly appeare that they must beleeve, or else bee utterly undone for ever.

Now when the soule hath the former antecedents wrought in him, it is hemmed in, and cannot tell which way to turne; when hee sees the bond of the Law about his necke, and Gods infinite

finite wrath upon the conſcience, and that hee hath pulled all the curſes that are written in Gods Booke, upon his head, and is lyable to the Juſtice of Heaven; when he ſees himſelfe ſhiftleſſe, and remedileſſe, and how his hopes & conceits are like broken Reeds, that will not ſerve his turne, nothing in the creature can comfort him, & ſtay him, and make his heart whole; this quailes the ſpirit of a ſinner, that hee can ſtand out no longer.

Secondly, a man will never beleeve till hee be allured to beleeve; for faith is not a compulſive act, but a free act of the heart,

heart, and a man can never get faith, till hee bee allured to it, till hee bee possessed with the infinite worth that is in a Redeemer; a man will never take the pains he must for Christ, untill he be well foreſtalled, and see what happineſſe and bleſſednesse hee ſhall attaine unto in the Lord Jesus. There are wonderfull deare things, that flesh and blood will not part withall, hee had rather pluck out his right eye, cut off his right hand, than forgoe the pleaſures of ſinne, and the delights of his owne heart, and the having of his owne will, and keeping his owne cuſtomes,

ſtomes, enjoying his own deſires, his owne ſelfe-love, and the love of the world, his owne carnall friends and fleſhly comforts, outward acquaintance, and ſuch like; the heart had as lieve loſe his life, as theſe things: Oh, they are marvellous deare, till the ſoule bee poſſeſſed wth greater excellencies, better hopes, and better comforts, and better refuges, and better profits and riches than ever they had formerly, otherwiſe the ſoule will never take Chriſt. *To you that beleeve he is precious,* (ſaith the Apoſtle:) If yee had not found him a precious Chriſt, if you had

1 Pet. 2.7.

had not found Jewels and Pearles in Chriſt, and heaven, that which is better than all the world, in Chriſt; you would never have forſaken all for him, you would never have forſaken your ſweet profits and pleaſures, and have trāpled theſe things under your feet, to embrace his Croſſe with chearfulneſſe. I come now to ſhew you, that as there are Antecedents, ſo there are effects wrought in the heart, before it can beleeve, and they are theſe.

1 Before the heart is able to beleeve, it is in ſome meaſure reformed; for the very ſight of the law, and

and of our owne miſery, and the very underſtanding of the infinite worth of Chriſt, which is ſuch, that whoſoever hath him, he is made for ever; but if he miſſe of him, he is utterly undone for ever; if hee have Chriſt, then hee ſhall bee able to pray, and looke God in the face with comfort, he ſhall then bee delivered from Gods wrath, and ſhall bee beloved of his heavenly Father, oh he is a bleſſed man: this (if any thing in the world) will make the heart fall a reforming.

We muſt know there is a reformation after faith, and a reformation be-

before faith; the reformation after faith is, when his faith reformes, and further sanctifies him, *Purifying your hearts by faith*, saith the Apostle; so that, effectuall faith brings purification, and reformation; yea, before a man can beleeve, hee must give over his sinnes, hee must lie at Christs feet, to be disposed of at his pleasure, hating his former, cold, and empty performances, resolving no longer to bee careleſſe in prayer, or negligent in holy duties: The Lord hath knocked him downe dead by the Law, and hath wrought upon him by the work of the

Acts 15.9.

the Goſpell thus farre, that hee dares not live as he hath done, after the luſts of his owne heart, and faſhions of the preſent world.

A wicked man cannot beleeve; before ever faith can come into the heart, he muſt be ſeparated and divorced from his vile courſes; that is, the outward act of ſinne muſt be given over, the inward purpoſe of a new life ſeriouſly reſolved upon, and an univerſall outward practice of Gods will muſt bee taken up; there muſt a ſtrong feare, and dread of ſinning againſt God, and not daring to offend the leaſt

kinde,

kinde, possesse the soule; so as though a poor creature cannot reforme aright, and repent aright, yet he prayes, and hears, and strives after perfection; there is no sinne but hee would gladly give it over, no duty but willingly hee takes it up: yet there is a great deale of difference betweene reformation before faith, and reformation after faith. First, the reformation, that is before faith, is but onely materiall; There are materials of faith, where there is not the true forme and life of faith, there are the materials of obedience to all Gods Commandements,

there

there is never a sinne but it resolves to leave, never a good course but it allowes and desires to take up. But the reformation that is after faith, is a living reformation, mighty and quickening; it hath the grace of Christ in it, it proceeds from the love of God, and tends to the glory of GOD; it is wrought by the Spirit of Christ, and flowes from faith in him; therefore there is a difference: but as soone as these Antecedents of faith appeare, there is presently a kinde of reformation wrought.

2. Another effect that the Antecedents of faith worke in the soule, is this,

this, The ſoule goes out of it ſelfe, when it ſees it is curſed by the Law, and in abſolute neceſſity of a Saviour, and is foreſtalled by the worth of Chriſt, and ſees upon what termes mercy is propounded, the ſoule being ſenſible of its owne beggarlines, that it is not able to thinke a good thought, or ſpeak a good word, it hath no more power to doe any thing which is good, than a dead man hath to quicken himſelfe: When this is throughly wrought upon a ſinner, than this effect followes, the ſoule immediately goes out, findes no peace at home,

and

and therefore it ſeeks out for reliefe; and this muſt be wrought, or elſe it cannot beleeve; the ſoule cannot lay hold on the righteouſneſſe of another, ſo long as it relies on any righteouſneſſe of its owne; it cannot bee made partaker of the Power of Chriſt, ſo long as it goes in its owne ſtrength; it cannot bee made partaker of the wiſdome of Chriſt, ſo long as it thinkes it can direct it ſelfe by its owne wiſedome; it cannot partake of the cõforts of Chriſt, ſo long as it hath hope and comforts of its own: *They truſting to their owne righteouſneſſe* (ſaith the Apoſtle) Rom. 10. 3

Apoſtle) *ſubmitted not to the righteouſneſſe of God.* Now this is the thing, people verily thinke they goe out of themſelves, and they deny themſelves, when in truth they doe not: he is a rare creature in theſe dayes, that layes aſide all his owne righteouſneſſe, and all worth in himſelfe. Alas, there is none ſo bad but he thinks himſelfe ſomebody.

3 Thirdly, another Effect is this, it makes the ſoule to vilifie the world, and the things of the world, accounting all but droſſe in compariſon of Chriſt: the practicall judgement of the ſoule doth

doth eſteeme all other things vile, as S. *Paul* did all his credit, and all his meanes and maintenance, outward dignity and applauſe whatſoever, all are as droſſe and dung to a beleeving heart. S. *Paul* had abundance of excellent things, but he trampled all under feet, and forſook all to gain *Chriſt:* When faith comes into the ſoule, then wee are beſt able to vilifie the world, and ſet a prize upon Chriſt. Phil. 3. 8.

But this vilifying of the creature is in part begun before faith comes in, becauſe that Chriſt will not come into a ſoule that is not worthy of him,

him, and faith will not dwell in an unworthy heart: *He that loves father or mother, ſonne or daughter more than mee, is not worthy of me,* ſaith our Saviour. Chriſt will firſt have the ſoule worthy of him, before it ſhall have him; I doe not ſpeake of Papiſticall worthineſſe, by way of condignity, for all heaven and earth are not worthy in this kinde, but I ſpeake of ſelf-denying worthineſs, and world-denying worthineſſe, of Evangelicall worthineſſe; if this worthineſſe bee not there, Chriſt will not enter into the heart: and this the ſoule hath wrought in it, before

Mat. 26. 37

before it can enjoy faith, it vilifies the world, and counts all things here below, but vile and base.

Fourthly, another Effect is this, the stubbornesse of the heart, and the stiffenesse of sinne in it, is rooted out, I meane the peremptorinesse of it, and not the reliques of it; for the remainders of corruption are wrought out of none upon the earth. Though a man have faith & true beliefe in Christ yet there is some stiffenes in the soul, some rebelliõ left in the heart, I meane the remainder of it; but the peremptorinesse and resolute stiffenesse, and stoutnesse is rooted out 4

before faith comes in. The Reason is, because Christ will not enter by violence, where-ever he dwels. A heart that is stout and stiffe, is not for Christ.

The very beckning and winkings, and lookings of Christ, and the gracious instincts of the Lord Jesus, the very whisperings, and the least cast of Christs eye, with bee of great power and force with the devout and prepared soule; therefore before Christ comes into the soule, he quailes the heart, and subdues the spirit, and makes it yeeld to him. A man will not easily leave his lusts

let the Miniſter hale and cry never ſo importunely, hee will not leave them; much adoe there is before a man will bee brought to give over his carnall acquaintance and ſinfull vanities, which he hath ſo long practiſed, and taken up: Now when Chriſt meanes to make roome for faith, theſe are leſſened and abated.

Laſtly, another Effect 5
is this, the peeviſhneſſe and waſpiſhneſſe of the heart is rooted out, whereby the ſoule could not abide to ſtay the Lords leaſure; naturally the heart is full of fretting and repining, if it have not his minde pre-

sently; the heart cannot
abide to stay and wait
Gods leasure; if it desire
any thing it must have it
presently, and if it have it
not when it would, it
peevish and fretfull, and
flies in Gods face, and
dares fall a murmuring
and be distempered with
passion, because hee hath
not his will streight; if
hee bee smitten for his
sinnes, and cry to God
for mercy, and have not
mercy and comfort pre-
sently; hee is weary and
tyred, and cannot hold
out; he would have com-
fort, and joy, and free-
dome from griefe quick-
ly; and if he cannot have
his minde, hee goes to
carna

carnall comforts, and tries concluſions otherwiſe; hee will not waite the Lords leaſure. Now when the Antecedents of *faith* come into the ſoule, they worke the heart to bee meeke, and gentle, and patient, and to wait upon the Almighty.

The heart naturally is like *Iehoram*, who when the famine was great, and God would not take it away quickly, hee was mad, hee was fretfull and impatient, and breaks into ill language, and baſe diſtempers, and hates *Eliſha*, and plots againſt the Prophets of G O D; hee was in a fury preſently: So it is with the heart of

2 Kings 6. 37.

man, it cannot abide to waite, therefore the soule goes to his lusts, & hearkens to flesh and blood, and gives way to his owne corruption; because hee cannot waite till GOD be his friend, therefore he goes to carnal friends; because he cannot waite till God quicken him, therefore hee quickens himselfe, after his owne sensuall manner. As the Children of Israel in the wilderneſſe, becauſe God did not give them flesh to their desire, they fell a lusting presently after *the Onyõs & garlick of Egypt.* What is the reason they would not waite? the Lord would have given them food,

Pſ. 106. 13

food, and food enough, but they muſt have it preſently, or elſe they fall a luſting. The promiſe and mercy of GOD commands the ſoule to waite, and the ſoule can never beleeve, unleſſe it ſtay the Lords leaſure: *If it tarry, wait for it*, ſaith the Prophet. The Lord many times lets his people *pray*, and makes them tarry before they be heard; and if they bee in paine, and would bee delivered, hee will make them wait for eaſe; if they bee in ſtreights and miſeries, and make petition to the Lord for freedome, many times hee makes them ſtay long for it: this is Hab. 2. 3.

contrary to flesh and blood, it cannot endure to waite the Lords leasure; though he tarry never so long, 20, 30, 40, yeares; nay, though the Lord tarry to the last gaspe for them, sometimes. But where true *faith* is, the soule will labour to waite; nay, before the soule is possessed with this precious Jewell of faith, all its peevishness is rooted out; the soule doth not say, How long shall I tarry? to day and to morrow, and the third day? but *I will wait untill the Lord shew mercy*. Though the Lord tarry long before hee draw nigh unto us, what then? we

Ps 122.3.

we muſt ſtill waite: *Wake not my beloved till hee pleaſe:* We muſt not bind the Lord to a day. If wee have not mercy and comfort and deliverance when we would, then we fret and take on, and will not ſtay the Lords leaſure; I tell you, wee had need have a great deale of patience to depend on the Almighty, for the Lord ſometimes will hold off a great while, and the ſoule will bee in many ſtraits, and many tentations, that unleſſe the ſoule bee marvellous patient, it will not bee able to hold out.

Now when the Antecedents of faith are

wrought in the ſoule, the ſoule is learned in ſome meaſure to waite upon God: indeed it doth not waite upon God aright, till the true act of faith is wrought in it. But this peeviſhneſſe of the heart, and croſſneſſe, and impatiency is taken away before faith comes into the ſoule; the ſoule begins to be content to ſtay Gods leaſure, if hee will but grant him the pardon of his ſinnes, let him ſhew mercy after what manner hee will; let it come though it come not this ſeven yeare, he will ever ſeeke to him, and ever lie at his gate, and ever make his moan to him, and will

uſe

uſe all meanes, and try all courſes hee hath enjoyned him. Thus wee ſee what wee muſt doe before we can beleeve.

Vſe. 1. The Uſe that we ſhould make hereof, is this: Is it ſo, that there are ſo many Antecedents of *faith*, ſo many things to bee done before wee can beleeve, then labour to ſee, that *faith* is a hard thing to attaine: People thinke *faith* is an eaſie matter, and they think of all other things they can beleeve, every man thinks hee can beleeve when he liſt, but here we ſee *faith* is a very hard thing. Is it not a hard thing to put the yoake of the Law a-

bout

bout a mans necke? to tame the heart of man, and unbottome a man of himselfe? to pluck a man from his sinfull courses, and make a man to appeare a damned creature in his owne sense and feeling? Is it not hard to empty the soule of, and root out the stiffenes and stoutnesse out of his corrupt nature? and to quaile the peevishnesse and impatience of a mans spirit? is not this marvellous hard to doe? of all the duties of religion, and graces of Gods Spirit, there is none so hard as *faith*; as our Saviour said, *If thou canst beleeve, all things are possible to him* Mar. 9. 23.

that

that beleeves; so may I say, If thou canst beleeve, all other duties of Christianity will bee familiar to thee. To beleeve is the hardest thing that a man is put to doe under heaven: When once a man beleeves, the hardest is done, the worst is past; what is not that man able to doe that can beleeve? that man may repent; that man may be quickened, and have acceptance with God; that mā may have the spirit of prayer when he cals upon God; that man may have the presence of Gods Spirit in all places, and upon all occasions; that man may grow in grace, and

and have power against sinne; that man may have joy unspeakeable, and peace that passes all understanding; he may soon attaine any thing, nothing is impossible to him that beleeves.

To beleeve is the very difficulty of all difficulties, therfore the *faith* that is common in the world, it is a naturall faith, it is an easie faith, they came by it at an easie rate, they never tooke paines for it, it never cost the breaking and wounding, & tearing of heart; it never cost them emptying, and piercing, and circumcising their owne soule; it never cost them much

much pain or griefe; they were never put to any great difficulty in getting of it.

Secondly, is it ſo that there bee ſo many works to bee done, before faith can be truely wrought in the ſoule? Then here we ſee that *faith* is a very rare thing; as it is a hard thing, ſo it is a rare thing; very few have true *faith*; for there are but few that have the Antecedents therof wrought in them. Are there not few that are damned in their own ſenſe and feeling? Are there not few that are poſſeſſed wth the ſpirit of bondage? that ever were emptyed of themſelves? that

Vſe 2.

that ever were reformed and humbled? Are there not few that ever were brought to vilifie the world, & count all things drosse & dung in respect of Christ? Are there not few that truely affect Christ, and seriously endeavour after communion with him? Are there not few that doe thus? Then there are few that doe beleeve.

Esa. 53. 1. *Lord, who hath beleeved our report*, (saith the Prophet *Esay*;) hee could hardly finde any faith in *Israel* and *Iudah*, *Who hath beleeved our report?* Where is the man that hath true faith? there be counterfeit faiths enough in

in the world: there is a dead faith that cannot quicken a man, a cowardly faith that cannot overcome the world, the faith of Devils that makes a man tremble now and then; there is a fooliſh and temporary faith that cannot hold out in a ſtorm, but for true ſaving faith it is difficult to bee found, for it is a rare thing to have the Antecedents thereof wrought in men.

Vſe 3. Thirdly, here we may ſee that *faith* is not deſirable to fleſh and blood, men cannot ſo much as deſire *faith* naturally: Every drunkard thinkes he deſires *faith*, and every ſwearer

ſwearer and adulterer they would have *faith* if they could tell how to come by it, and many thinke they are truly poſſeſſed of it; but take this for a certaine truth, the heart of man doth naturally hate true faith, and abhorre it; for can a man naturally abide to acknowledge, I am a damned and a curſed creature? Can a man abide that all his luſts ſhould be pronounced luſts, and all his courſes to bee wayes leading to deſtruction? can a man abide to be diſcovered, and anatomized in this caſe? Let me tell you brethren, there is nothing goes more againſt the heart

heart of man, than to bee told what he is.

Take a carnall man, though he be not ſincere, he had as lieve have a ſword runne into his breſt, as to heare one ſay hee is an Hypocrite, a wretch, and a curſed creature, he cannot abide to heare this, he counts it the moſt rigorous and cruell language that can bee. The heart of man naturally is an enemy to *true faith.*

Every wicked man is a ſtranger to effectuall and lively *faith*: The Phariſees would not beleeve in Chriſt; *Doe any of the Phariſees beleeve in him, and ſhall wee?* Nay, they did

did abhorre it; they thought if they ſhould beleeve in him, they were undone, they ſhould loſe all their reſpect, they ſhould loſe all their Phariſaicall Offices and degrees; they were utterly diſgraced and beggared, and all their preferment went to the ground, if once they beleeved in Chriſt: therefore they would not truſt in him.

A man may thinke he would have faith, when as indeed he would have his owne minde, and his owne deſires, and hee would goe on in his owne way. It is a grievous thing to bee croſſed by others, but for a man to croſſe him-

himſelfe, this hee cannot abide; nay, the very Elect people of GOD would never ſeeke after *faith*, unleſſe the Lord did worke it in them. It is againſt the nature of mans will. *This is his Commandement, that we beleeve in his Name:* 1 Ioh. 3. 23
Now if it be a Commandement, we muſt confeſſe it againſt the nature of fleſh and blood; for if fleſh and blood did like it, there need be no command for it; but GOD commands men to beleeve, becauſe the obſtinacy of the heart of man is ſhewen moſt in *faith*: There is no grace of the Spirit but the ſoule had rather

rather have it than *faith*; neither meeknesse, nor temperance, nor patience, nor no estate nor condition but the soule had rather have it than *faith*, for *faith* is a mystery, and is directly opposite to flesh, to carnall reason and imagination: Therefore when GOD cõverts his Elect, he doth not finde them seeking *faith*: Esa.66.1. *I am found of those that sought me not.* They were not seeking after *faith*, no, they were enemies to it; till the Lord humbled their soules, and subjected them to the bond of his Covenant, they never regarded to beleeve: *faith* is not desirable

rable to corrupt nature.

Againe, is it ſo, that all theſe Antecedents muſt be wrought before *faith*? then hence wee ſee that *faith* is not ſuddenly attained unto: Oh, ſayes one, ſuch a Sermon converted mee to the *faith*, and ſuch a point wrought upon me, and ſuch a Miniſter in ſuch a Pulpit brought me home. Hadſt thou *faith* without rending and tearing of thy bowels, without being emptyed of thy ſelfe, without being touched by the Law? didſt thou come by *faith* without this adoe? Deceive not thy poore ſoule, *faith* is a treatable thing, and all theſe

Vſe 4.

the Antecedents must first be wrought in thee; it was long before even the Apostles of Christ could beleeve; *Oh faithlesse generation, how long shall I be with you?* Mark 9.19 saith our Saviour to them: It was long before they could beleeve; *faith* cannot be sudden, the Lord works it in some competent time, and the soule of man is the cause of it, it stands holding off and drawing backe; there is a world of oppositon and resisting, a world of cavelling and objecting, and thrusting the necke out of the Collar, and loth the heart is to come and yeeld by *faith* to Jesus

as Chriſt; it is ſomewhat
ong a doing, if it be too
ong, it is to be ſuſpected
lſo, for commonly the
Lord doth it in ſome cõ-
etẽt meaſure of time; the
Lord can infuſe *faith* on a
udden. God may doe as
he pleaſe, and bring in
faith after what manner
he will, and ſome effects
may be in one, ſome in a-
nother; but this is the
courſe of God generally:
and though the Lord doe
worke *faith* after a more
eaſie manner, yet there is
the ſame effects, the ſoule
is brought to the ſame
humility, and emptineſſe,
and going out of it ſelfe;
the ſame relying upon
God, and humbling it

ſelfe by the Law for t
manner of it.

Vſe 5. Laſtly, let us labour
finde theſe Antecede
of *faith*, that the Co
mandement may co
and ſtrike us, and t
Law of God may co
and dead us, that we m
bee unbottomed a
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upon; and if wee ha
faith, we muſt needs ha
theſe Antecedents; the
fore if ye have them no
labour for them. Unle
your rockineſſe and ſti
neſſe be taken away, y
cannot beleeve: if you
hearts bee ſtill hard, a
your ſpirits bee ſtill ſtub
borne and ſtony, the *faith*
that is built thereupo
wi

will tumble downe and come to nothing; all your *faith* that is in a rocky heart, is no true *faith*; therefore labour to have thy heart well moulded by the Law and Goſpell; uſe all meanes, take all courſes, follow all ordinances private and publike; bee inſtant daily and continually, that the Lord may ſoften thy heart, and may make thee come to Chriſt, and yeeld to the Goſpell.

FINIS.